

## **WSJ.com's Political Diary: John Boehner's Civil Disobedience on Earmarks**

Congressional Democrats have been none too pleased with a Republican campaign to highlight earmarking largesse. Now the Democratic leadership's latest blocking tactic has Republican Minority Leader John Boehner crying "censorship."

Mr. Boehner last summer asked permission to set up a Web site under the Web address [www.earmarkreform.house.gov](http://www.earmarkreform.house.gov). He was granted his request by the Office of the Chief Administrative Officer, which provides support to House staffs on a supposedly nonpartisan basis. The Web site, which went live a few weeks ago, is already doing a lively trade as thousands of citizens check in to read about the latest Republican attempts to institute an earmarking moratorium as well as revel in examples of earmarking excess. Then came an email last week from the Chief Administrative Officer, who now insists the Web site has to be shut down and reestablished under a new domain name. Why? House rules allegedly require that any officially-sanctioned Web address must be "recognizably derivative or representative" of the Member sponsoring the site. It can't be a policy slogan like "earmark reform."

Mr. Boehner fired an outraged letter back to the ostensibly nonpartisan office, whose head, Daniel Beard, was appointed by the Democratic majority and previously served on the staff of Nancy Pelosi's close ally, Rep. George Miller. Mr. Boehner pointed out that changing addresses now "will inevitably hamper the effectiveness of the new website, much to the convenience of the majority that runs the House." He also noted that the order came just days after an outside report documented that freshman Democrats had been receiving bucketfuls of pork from their leadership.

Mr. Boehner is now refusing to dismantle the site until Mr. Beard's office coughs up more information. Republicans note that Ms. Pelosi's "select" committee on climate change has the address [www.globalwarming.house.gov](http://www.globalwarming.house.gov), which is no less a slogan. The CAO hasn't said what it will do if Mr. Boehner refuses to cooperate. But stay tuned; this should be fun.

*-- Kim Strassel*